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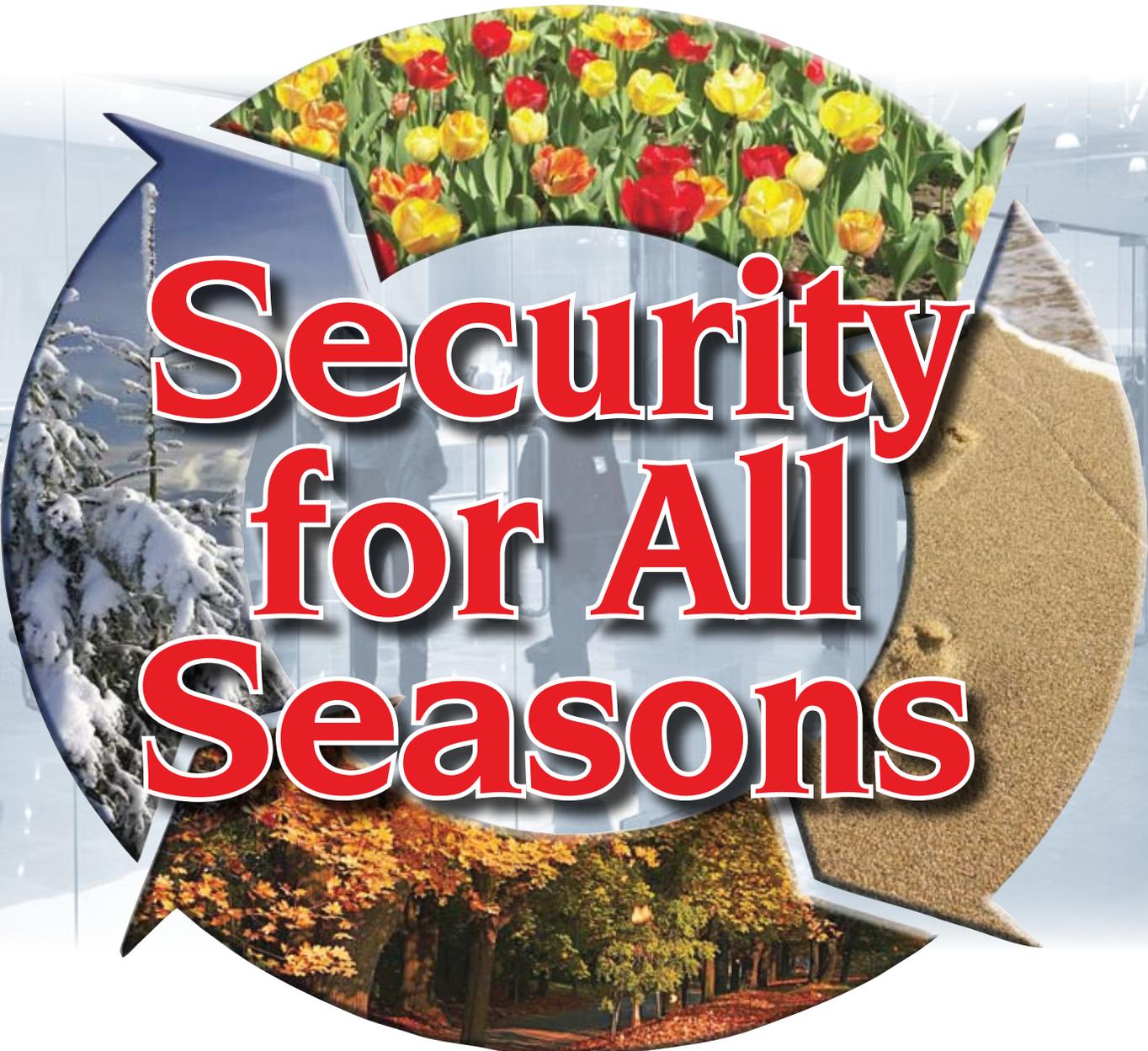
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Security for All Seasons

Networked video provides simple solutions for the complex needs of the County of Simcoe

By Fredrik Nilsson

The County of Simcoe, located just one hour north of Toronto, is dubbed as “The Place of All Seasons.” Its vast landscapes offer residents and visitors sun-kissed beaches, biking and hiking trails, championship golf, fishing, skiing and shops for the antiques enthusiast. One could say the county’s security

challenges are just as diverse as its scenic terrain.

Simcoe is comprised of 16 municipalities, towns and townships. The county employs hundreds of people that work on and oversee many of the services that sustain quality of life for its residents. The county is responsible for services including roads and engineering, forestry, environmental, transportation,

housing and bylaw enforcement.

Chris Harper, real estate and facilities manager for the County of Simcoe, helps to manage and oversee security systems for the county's buildings, which include the main administration building; Ontario Works offices, which provide income and employment assistance for people who are in temporary financial need; and four long-term health care facilities. The administration building houses all senior management division heads, the County Council and County Council Chamber, and one Ontario Works office. In all, the administration building houses 300 employees.

Many of the county-run offices are strategically located throughout the county to best serve all residents regardless of age, background and/or financial need. Unlike corporate settings, county

buildings are open to and used by the public on a regular basis. For example, the County Council Chambers are used frequently throughout the month for public meetings. As a result, security leaders must ensure the proper tools are in place to protect county employees, confidential documents and plans, and the people who the county serves.

Harper called on Hamilton, Ontario-based Aatel Communications Inc., an integration company that provides communication, security and life safety solutions, to upgrade its security system using a variety of products — including Axis Communications video encoders and network cameras.

With Aatel's guidance, Harper was able to make changes to various office buildings around the county that enabled security officials to view video remotely and leverage existing tools, providing significant cost savings for the county.

stant deactivation of the motion detection system, especially for employees who came into work outside of normal business hours. The problem was, the system wasn't just deactivated in one wing or one area of the building; it was deactivated building-wide, leaving the offices and staff vulnerable to break-ins should they have occurred. Only a portion of the doors had swipe card systems, while others were operated by keys, which can be lost and are hard to manage.

In addition to the motion detection system and swipe card system, three analog cameras were strategically placed to monitor staff entrances in two wings of the building plus the shipping and receiving doors in the third wing of the building. The cameras were wired back to the reception desk at the main entrance, which allowed the receptionist to see activity around those particular doors real-time, but no one else in a remote location could view incoming video.

The county wanted to upgrade the system to allow additional authorities to view the video and view it remotely.

As an answer to the county's problems, officials replaced the intrusion detection alarm system and the swipe card system with one system that provides both capabilities in a simplified manner. The new system can be deactivated in one area rather than building-wide, and the new card reader access system was installed on all doors, giving the security team the ability to control access to each of them.

Aatel installed the AXIS 241Q, a four-port video encoder that accommodates four analog video streams with image upload, alarm notification and secure video handling and configuration. The team also installed AXIS 211 Network Cameras for entrances and the AXIS 216FD Network Cameras for the reception area of the Ontario Works office within the administration building. According to Rob Gathercole, account manager with Aatel, the network cameras "fit in with the schematics and produced a clear image in low-light settings."

AXIS 211s network cameras were



The administration building (top, right and below) houses 300 employees, senior management division heads, the County Council and County Council Chamber, and one Ontario Works office. Aatel installed AXIS 211 Network Cameras (above) for entrances and the AXIS 216FD Network Cameras for the reception area of the Ontario Works office within the administration building. Harper was able to make changes to various office buildings around the county that enabled security officials to view video remotely.



Stepping up Protection in the Administration Building

In the past, the administration building used a motion detection system and a swipe card system for a portion of the doors. One challenge the county faced was the con-

used at the entrances of the administration building because of their auto iris vari-focal lens capability. The building's glass doors created added security challenges because large amounts of sunlight coming through the windows

In addition to the motion detection system and swipe card system, three analog cameras were strategically placed to monitor staff entrances in two wings of the building plus the shipping and receiving doors in the third wing of the building.

can blind the security cameras. Thanks to the auto iris vari-focal lenses, the AXIS 211s function like the human eye; a pupil retracts and expands depending on the amount of light coming in just as the lens of the AXIS 211 retracts and expands depending on the amount of light coming into view.

Gathercole anticipates the second phase of the installation will integrate Axis cameras with the intrusion detection alarm system.

Solutions for Long-Term Care Facilities

There are four long-term care facilities under the management of the county: Simcoe Manor in Beeton; Georgian Manor in Penetanguishene; Sunset Manor in Collingwood; and Trillium Manor in Orillia. All of the facilities used an intrusion detection alarm system. Only two of the facilities, Simcoe Manor and Trillium Manor, used analog cameras with a digital video recorder (DVR), which enabled them to record video locally and view video at the nurse's station. Security officials wanted a more effective system that would enable them to view video remotely and give more coverage to facilities without cameras.

As a solution, the 241Q Video Encoders from Axis were installed at Simcoe Manor and Trillium Manor allowing video to be streamed and recorded back at the administration building, which houses the server and serves as the central IT hub. Thanks

to the use of the video encoders, which uses the wide area network to transmit video back to the server, security leaders did not have to install another DVR.

Seven AXIS 216FD Network Cameras were also installed in Trillium Manor

to maximize security coverage and help monitor the patients, some of whom have dementia and are easily disoriented in their surroundings.

Ontario Works Gets a Security System Overhaul

In addition to the video encoder installed in the Ontario Works office within the administration building, there was another video encoder installed at its office in Barrie, in order to leverage the use of four existing analog cameras. While all of the offices had an intrusion detection system and a panic button if an emergency arose, none of the other offices had any way to track incidents inside the offices. Several 216FD Network Cameras were installed to help.

The Ontario Works department also includes county-subsidized housing complexes. The housing complexes range from apartments to multi-family homes, to townhomes and single-family homes. No security systems were in place at any of the complexes prior to a year ago. Fortunately, the local housing authority, which oversees the management of the housing units, requested security cameras after the successful implementation at the Ontario Works offices.

Approximately 250 network cameras were installed across 26 housing sites. The majority of the installation included AXIS 216FDs, which monitored hallways and common areas to assist with tenant safety and reduce crime, while about 40 include the AXIS

214 PTZ Network Cameras. The PTZ cameras monitor exterior parking lots and walkways and have been especially helpful during the winter when officials have needed to make sure walkways are shoveled for the majority of seniors who live in the complexes.

The location of some of the housing sites presented a challenge for security officials because they were surrounded by rocky terrain and were in very remote parts of Ontario. Officials did not have access to some of the same infrastructure that would have been found in a more urban area like downtown Toronto. They had to come up with creative solutions to complete their security installation.

For example, they had to install a network video recorder (NVR), which records the video from the network cameras and makes live and recorded video available over the Internet. They used a NVR because there was not enough existing fiber optic cable to provide the bandwidth needed to send video back to the server in the administration building. The NVR enabled officials to record video locally and view the video remotely using DSL.

The county is already looking ahead for bigger and better security plans in 2008. The second phase of the project will be to integrate many of the card access systems with the Axis network cameras. **ST&D**



Fredrik Nilsson is general manager of Axis Communications, a provider of IP-based network video solutions that include network cameras and video encoders for remote monitoring and security surveillance. This case study is part of a 10-article series that takes an in-depth look at the design challenges integrators face when implementing network video solutions in the real world. Previous articles have included case studies on wireless installations, complying with enterprise IT, large storage needs, large bandwidth needs and scalable systems.